

# News from Ed Markey

**United States Congress**

**Massachusetts Seventh District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **IS THE U.S. PREPARED TO FIGHT INTERNET-BASED TERRORISM?**

*Rep. Markey Questions Whether Chinese-Web Attacks Are the Tip of The Iceberg*

**Washington, DC** – Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee and Ranking Member of the Telecommunications and the Internet Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, today sent a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, State Department Secretary Condoleezza Rice, Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman and Federal Bureau of Investigation Director Robert Mueller seeking answers about each department's ability to thwart hacking of its computers and networks. The letter follows a report in the August 25, 2005 edition of the Washington Post that indicates that Chinese Web sites are being used to infiltrate U.S. government networks maintained by the Pentagon and other departments ("Hackers Attack Via Chinese Web Sites; U.S. Agencies' Networks Are Among Targets").

"I am concerned that vital information maintained by the Department of Homeland Security, Pentagon and other departments is being accessed by hackers. This information could be used by terrorists or foreign governments seeking to strike our country. We need to ensure that cyber security officials across our government are doing everything possible – including sharing information about the best strategies to deter and detect these attacks - so that we keep a step ahead of hackers in the escalating battle to secure our sensitive information," Rep. Markey said.

Congressman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS), Ranking Member of the House Homeland Security Committee and a co-signor of the letter stated, "In today's interconnected networked world, it is critical that the federal government's systems are secure from both inside and outside attacks. More sophisticated technologies have resulted in less tech-savvy criminals having the tools to inflict widespread damage."

The letter Rep. Markey and Thompson sent today asked a series of questions, including:

- Are Chinese Web sites the only foreign sites associated with hacking attempts, or has your Department identified other hacking incidents launched from foreign sites other than Chinese sites? If yes, which other foreign sites raise concerns?
- Does the Department consult with private sector corporations or academic experts, where appropriate, to gain access to the latest technologies and techniques to deter, detect or recover from hacking incidents?

- Has the Department's inspector general, the Government Accountability Office or any other independent entity reviewed the Department's cyber security posture in the past 24 months? If so, please list the report title, and for each recommendation contained therein, please indicate whether the Department has completed implementation of the recommendation, and if not, why not.

"Today's report is another wake-up call that terrorists or others intent on harming our nation can use the anonymity of the Internet to inflict serious damage. Securing government databases and networks is an ongoing challenge, and a sustained, coordinated Federal effort is needed to keep sensitive information from prying eyes," Rep. Markey concluded.

For more information on Rep. Markey's work to secure the U.S. against terrorism through data breaches and hacking check out: <http://www.house.gov/markey/>

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